

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 1803

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, LE, US, NO
SUBJECT: NORWEGIAN UNIFIL CONTINGENT

1. IN MEETING WITH EMBOFF ON MARCH 31, NORWEGIAN FIRST
SECRETARY HANS LONGVA SAID THE FOLLOWING:

2. NORWAY HAD COMMITTED 850 MEN TO UNIFIL, BROKEN DOWN AS
FOLLOWS:

- A. ONE INFANTRY BRIGADE OF 700 MEN;
- B. FIFTY (50) MAN SUPPORT GROUP, INCLUDING MP'S AND
MEDICAL PERSONNEL;
- C. ONE HUNDRED (100) MEN TO FLY AND MAINTAIN FOUR
NORWEGIAN HELICOPTERS.

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3. THERE WERE ALREADY 59 NORWEGIAN SOLDIERS IN COUNTRY. THE
REST OF THE NORWEGIAN CONTINGENT WOULD BE ARRIVING IN THREE
SETS OF PLANES: AMERICAN, WEST GERMAN AND NORWEGIAN.
ALTHOUGH THE AMERICAN AND WEST GERMAN AIRCRAFT WOULD ALL
LAND IN TEL AVIV, THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT HAD DECIDED
THAT FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES ALL THE NORWEGIAN PLANES

MUST LAND IN BEIRUT. THE FIRST NORWEGIAN PLANE WOULD ARRIVE IN BEIRUT ON APRIL 1. THERE WOULD BE FOUR OTHER NORWEGIAN PLANES ARRIVING, ONE EACH ON APRIL 2, 3, 4 AND 5.

4. SECRETARY GENERAL WALDHEIM HAD ASKED NORWAY TO INCREASE ITS TROOP COMMITMENT. THE NORWEGIAN MINISTER OF DEFENSE HAD REPLIED THAT 1,275 WAS THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF TROOPS HE COULD POSSIBLY COMMIT. LONGVA COMMENTED THAT NORWAY WOULD IN FACT PROBABLY INCREASE ITS COMMITMENT SO THAT THE TOTAL NUMBER WAS SOMEWHERE BETWEEN 850 AND 1,275. GENERAL ERSKINE HAD ASKED THE NORWEGIANS AND FRENCH TO MANAGE UNIFIL'S LOGISTIC SYSTEM. THE NORWEGIANS HAD NOT YET DECIDED WHETHER TO ACCEPT THIS TASK.

5. THERE WAS A DISPUTE AS TO WHO WOULD GET THE FOUR NORWEGIAN HELICOPTERS. UNIFIL HEADQUARTERS WANTED THEM AND SO DID THE NORWEGIAN BRIGADE COMMANDER.

6. THE NORWEGIAN BRIGADE HAD BEEN DEFINITELY COMMITTED TO THE MARJAYUN AREA. THE ISRAELIS HAD MADE NO SPECIFIC PROMISE ABOUT FACILITATING THE ENTRY OF THE BRIGADE INTO THE AREA, BUT HAD PROMISED THAT THEY WOULD FACILITATE MEDICAL EVACUATION TO ISRAEL OF ANY WOUNDED NORWEGIAN SOLDIERS.
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7. THE NORWEGIANS WERE SKEPTICAL ABOUT ISRAELI GUARANTEES FOR MEDICAL EVACUATION. THE FRENCH MILITARY ATTACHE HAD SAID THAT WHEN THE FRENCH SOLDIER WAS WOUNDED IN TYRE ON MARCH 30, THE ISRAELIS HAD REFUSED TO ALLOW THE FRENCH TO FLY HIM DIRECTLY FROM TYRE TO HAIFA, EVEN BY AN OVER-THE-SEA ROUTE. THE ISRAELIS HAD MADE THE FRENCH DRIVE THE WOUNDED SOLDIER SOUTH THROUGH THE ISRAELI LINES, WHERE HE WAS PICKED UP BY AN ISRAELI HELICOPTER. THE NORWEGIANS BELIEVED THEY MIGHT HAVE TO EVACUATE THEIR PERSONNEL TO BEIRUT VIA THE BIQA, IF THE ISRAELIS REFUSED TO ALLOW NORWEGIAN HELICOPTERS TO FLY DIRECTLY TO ISRAEL.

8. A NORWEGIAN JOURNALIST HAD RECENTLY INTERVIEWED THE PALESTINIAN COMMANDER AT CHATEAU BEAUFORT. THE COMMANDER HAD PROMISED THAT THE PALESTINIANS IN CHATEAU BEAUFORT WOULD NOT FIRE ON THE NORWEGIAN TROOPS. HE HAD WARNED, HOWEVER, THAT THE PALESTINIANS COULD NOT PROMISE TO AVOID EXCHANGING FIRE WITH THE ISRAELIS. THE COMMANDER HAD ADMITTED THERE WERE IRAQI FIGHTERS IN CHATEAU BEAUFORT, AND THE JOURNALIST

HAD SEEN TWO PAKISTANI FIGHTERS THERE.
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